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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 4182nd meeting of the Security Council, held on 3 August 2000, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation in East Timor", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council recalls its previous resolutions and the statements of its President on the situation in East Timor. It welcomes the report of the Secretary-General of 26 July 2000 (S/2000/738) on the United Nations Transitional Administration in East Timor (UNTAET). It takes note with warm appreciation of the progress made by UNTAET and pays tribute to the leadership of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General. The Council also welcomes the significant progress made in building healthy relations between East Timor and Indonesia. The Council acknowledges in this regard the cooperation shown by the Government of Indonesia, UNTAET and the people of East Timor.

"The Security Council strongly supports the steps taken by UNTAET to strengthen the involvement and direct participation of the East Timorese people in the administration of their territory, in particular the establishment on 14 July 2000 of the National Council and the reorganization of UNTAET, with a view to building capacity in the territory in the run up to independence. The Council invites the Secretary-General to report at an early date, on the basis of close consultations with the East Timorese, on the process for adopting a constitution and holding democratic elections.

"The Security Council notes that the National Council of Timorese Resistance is advocating the creation of a national security force. In this regard it welcomes work being done on East Timor's future defence and security needs and their practical and financial implications. It urges the East Timorese people to conduct a broad discussion of these issues. The Council welcomes the humanitarian relief given by UNTAET to the cantoned troops of the Armed Forces for the National Liberation of East Timor and encourages further assistance in this regard.

"The Security Council condemns the murder on 24 July 2000 of a New Zealand soldier serving with UNTAET and expresses its sympathy to the Government and people of New Zealand and to the family of the murdered peacekeeper. The Council is determined to ensure the safety and security of United Nations personnel in East Timor. In this regard, it requests the Secretary-General to inform the Council as soon as possible on the outcome of his investigation into the incident. It welcomes the establishment on 31 July

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2000 of a joint investigation between UNTAET and the Government of Indonesia and welcomes also the cooperation of the Government of Indonesia to bring the perpetrators to justice.

"The Security Council expresses its profound concern at the continuing presence of large numbers of refugees from East Timor in camps in West Timor, at the continuing presence of militia in the camps and at their intimidation of staff of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). It expresses particular concern that this intimidation reached such a level that UNHCR were forced to postpone indefinitely their important effort to register refugees and determine whether they wished to return to East Timor or to be resettled, a task that should be completed as soon as possible given the impending rainy season. The Council calls for a more determined involvement in this problem by the Government of Indonesia, including implementation of their memorandum of understanding with UNHCR of 14 October 1999 and of a recent security agreement concluded between local authorities and UNHCR. The Council calls on the Government of Indonesia to take effective steps to restore law and order, to establish conditions of security for refugees and international humanitarian personnel, to allow free access for such personnel to the camps, to separate the former military personnel, police and civil servants from the refugees and to arrest those militia extremists who are attempting to sabotage the resettlement process.

"The Security Council acknowledges that the Government of Indonesia has approached these challenges with an attitude of cooperation, manifested, *inter alia*, by the signing of such important agreements with UNTAET as their memorandum of understanding of 6 April 2000 on legal, judicial and human rights matters, and their memorandum of understanding of 11 April 2000 on Tactical Coordination, and the establishment on 5 July 2000 of a Joint Border Commission. The Council regrets, however, that serious problems persist and looks forward to these agreements being translated into concrete progress on the ground. It also calls on the Government of Indonesia to cooperate more closely with UNTAET in the field to end cross-border incursions from West Timor, to disarm and disband the militias and to bring to justice those militia members guilty of crimes.

"The Security Council takes note of the Secretary-General's intention to reduce the size of the UNTAET military component in the eastern sector of East Timor to a battalion size force of 500 by the end of January 2001 in light of the situation on the ground.

"The Security Council requests the Secretary-General to keep it closely informed of the situation in East Timor, including through a military assessment of the security situation and its implications for the structure of the military component of UNTAET. It also requests the Secretary-General to continue to report to it in line with the requirements set out in its resolution 1272 (1999) of 25 October 1999. It requests the Secretary-General to present to it, in his next regular report, detailed plans on the transition to independence for East Timor, which should be drawn up in close consultation with the East Timorese people.

"The Security Council will remain actively seized of the matter."